



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

19 August 2010

Mr. Timothy J. Van Norman
Chief, Branch of Permits
Division of Management Authority
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203

Re: Permit Application No. PRT-10236A
(Seattle Aquarium)

Dear Mr. Van Norman:

The Marine Mammal Commission, in consultation with its Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals, has reviewed the above-referenced permit request with regard to the goals, policies, and requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and offers the following recommendation. The applicant is requesting authorization to import from Canada 30 tissue samples (i.e., plugs) from northern sea otters for genetic analysis. The samples were collected in 2003 and 2004 during routine tagging by researchers from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans under a permit from the Canadian government and currently are maintained at the Vancouver Aquarium. The samples will be analyzed to study the gene flow between sea otter populations in Washington State and Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

RECOMMENDATION

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the requested permit, provided that the applicant be required to obtain all necessary permits under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora before importing or exporting any marine mammal parts.

The Commission believes that the activities for which it has recommended approval are consistent with the purposes and policies of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and other applicable laws.

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Ragen".

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director